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(Useful Publications for Oyster Farmers of the Maritimes*)



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by

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OYSTER-MEN'S DISASTER

To-day the oyster industry of the Maritimes is reeling under the worst disaster in its history. An epidemic disease, harmless to humans, has struck oyster populations in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and is still raging. In 1957 the oyster harvest in these two provinces was down to 30% of its pre-epidemic level. The expectation is that it will fall to 15% in 1958.

Prince Edward Island oysters are immune to the disease and Island oyster-men are fishing their stocks hard to meet the heaviest market demands they have ever experienced. Among the buyers is a new customer calling for mass quantities. This new customer is the Federal Department of Fisheries and the oysters it buys are being used as brood stock to re-establish the devastated Nova Scotia and New Brunswick populations.

NEED FOR CAREFUL WORK

For the next few years oyster-men, especially oyster farmers, must work with the greatest care. Island men must improve their oyster farming methods and boost production or continued heavy harvesting may reduce stocks and lead to a long-term depression from overfishing. New Brunswick and Nova Scotia oyster-men must preserve and make the best possible use of the brood stocks they are given by the Department. All will have to collect seed oysters and rear them by the most efficient culture methods if they are to stay in business. The Department and the Fisheries Research Board are working hard to relieve the disaster but unless oyster-men exert themselves as never before, recovery will be slow indeed.

NEED FOR INFORMATION

For effective work oyster-men must make use of available information. The Department and the Board frequently release information through the press, the radio and sometimes over television. But these releases are generally less useful to oyster-men than the printed documents that are available to them through the Department.

Many of the older oyster farmers who operate leaseholds under federal government jurisdiction have saved the documents the Department has sent them from time to time and they find the little libraries they have collected in this way very helpful. By thoughtful reading they are often able to avoid costly mistakes in their practice of oyster farming. And, what is just as valuable, they often get new ideas on how to improve methods. All oyster-men should follow their example.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION

Few realize how much information has been released for the use of Maritime oyster-men. So far there are 56 documents. Many of these are out of print and in some instances the information they supply is out of date. However, this circular tells what they are and where to find them. The list at the end gives their titles. Taken together these documents summarize the history of work by the Department and Board since 1929 when they combined efforts to foster what may be called modern oyster culture. This is founded on a considerable knowledge of oyster biology that was not available to the early culturists.

Most of the documents have been prepared by the Board's staff and published by the Board. Several serial publications are involved — General Series Circulars, Progress Reports, Oyster Farming Circulars and Bulletins. However, the Department itself has published one Bulletin and recently Department staff have prepared information that has been released in Board publications.

In our list code letters are included to indicate the particular series in which each document appears.

All Progress Reports published since 1940 include French summaries and documents coded, "E&F," in our list, appear complete in both English and French. The others appear in English only.

* The last article of special interest to oyster fishermen was "Introducing European Oysters to the Maritimes" published in Progress Reports (Atlantic) of the Fisheries Research Board of Canada No. 71, 1958.

General Series Circulars These are published by the Fisheries Research Board's Biological Station at St. Andrews, N. B. But through arrangements between the Department and the Board those circulars that concern oysters have been distributed to oyster farmers who have leaseholds under federal government jurisdiction. The titles of these are mentioned in our list with the code letters, "GSC," opposite and the accompanying figure is the serial number of that circular.

Progress Reports (Atlantic) These are published at three-months intervals by the Fisheries Research Board and concern all branches of the fishing industry. They are distributed without charge from the Biological Station, St. Andrews, N. B., to anyone on request. Recently the Department has made a practice of obtaining separate copies of Progress Report articles on oysters and distributing them to those with leaseholds from the federal government. These reports are mentioned in our list and coded, "PR." The accompanying figure is the number of the Progress Report in which the article appeared.

Oyster Farming Circulars Oyster farming circulars were prepared by the Board but are no longer issued — No. 19, released in September, 1945, ended the series. In our list they are coded, "OFC" and the serial number of the circular is also shown. Much of the information supplied by Oyster Farming Circulars is out of date and the needs they served are now being met by General Series Circulars and Progress Report articles.

Bulletins Bulletins on oyster culture are up-to-date compilations of information and four have been prepared — 1931, 1932, 1935 and 1941. In our list they are coded, "B" or "DF," and the serial number of the Bulletin is generally shown. These were distributed by the Department through arrangements with the Board. The oyster industry is constantly changing and any compilation is bound to be out of date soon after it is issued. The last copies of the 1941 bulletin, "Oyster Farming in Eastern Canada," have just been distributed and a revised bulletin is being prepared. Until it is distributed those who need information must find it in the 1941 edition and keep up-to-date by reading General Series Circulars and Progress Reports.

HOW TO GET DOCUMENTS

Unfortunately, many of the early documents are no longer available. These are shown in our list with an "*" opposite. They are worth listing because many libraries and many of the older oyster farmers still have them and can make them available.

You can obtain copies of available documents by writing the Deputy Minister of Fisheries. If you are an oyster-man you should identify yourself as such in making requests, perhaps quote your lease number.

If you hold a lease under federal government jurisdiction you will not be charged for documents unless your request is for extra copies. Letters addressed to the Deputy Minister of Fisheries may be marked "O. H. M. S.", in which case no postage stamps are required.

The documents you want should be listed by title as shown in our list.

CARE OF DOCUMENTS

These documents are valuable and should be carefully preserved. It is suggested that you arrange them according to document number, cover them and lace them together to form a book. If this circular is folded so that page 3 is uppermost, it will make a useful index that can be bound at the front of the book. The blank space on page 4 can be used to enter the titles of future publications the Department may distribute.

Looking after oyster publications in this way insures their maximum usefulness.

KEEPING UP-TO-DATE

In recent publications of interest to oyster-men, references are made to immediately preceding documents on oysters. Sometimes this back reference is in the form of a footnote (example, page 1 of this circular), sometimes it is incorporated in the opening paragraph of the publication (example, General Series Circular 31). The titles of these documents are included in our list. We urge you to get them now and read them carefully.

Changes in the oyster industry are going on rapidly and if your work is going to be effective you must keep up-to-date. As time goes on our list will become less useful unless you keep it up-to-date. Whenever you receive a new document you should add its title to the list. But first you should look for back references to be sure you haven't missed a publication. If you have, get it, read it, and add it to your library.

To help us keep up-to-date we would welcome reports of outstanding developments in your oyster district. Any information should be addressed to the Deputy Minister of Fisheries, Ottawa, for forwarding to the Fisheries Research Board of Canada, Biological Station, St. Andrews, N. B.

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USEFUL PUBLICATIONS FOR OYSTER FARMERS OF THE MARITIMES

Document Number	Title	Publication & serial number	Year of pub.	Document Number	Title	Publication & serial number	Year of pub.
1	Disappearance and return of Malpeque oysters	PR 2*	1931	33	Development of oyster stocks resistant to an epidemic disease	PR 29*	1941
2	The oysters of Malpeque Bay	B 22*	1931	34	Packing and grading oysters in the shell (E&F)	OFC 13*	1941
3	Oyster farming on the Atlantic coast of Canada	DF *	1932	35	A new bulletin for oyster farmers (E&F)	OFC 14*	1941
4	American Atlantic oysters change their sex	PR 5*	1932	36	Oyster farming in eastern Canada	B 60*	1941
5	Mud bottoms hardened with sand for oyster farming	PR 5*	1932	37	Survey of the shore mollusc resources of the Northumberland Strait coast of Nova Scotia	PR 32*	1942
6	FLOATS FOR THE COLLECTION OF OYSTER SPAT	PR 7*	1933	38	Oysters fished early do not store well (E&F)	OFC 15*	1942
7	Failures in oyster spat production at Shediac	PR 8*	1933	39	The spat failure in 1941 (E&F)	OFC 16*	1943
8	Frozen oysters survive unless jarred	PR 10*	1934	40	Need for production of seed oysters at Shippagan (E&F)	OFC 17*	1943
9	The storage of oysters in the shell (E&F)	B 44*	1934	41	Better spat collection by proper handling of collectors (E&F)	OFC 18*	1943
10	The effects of temperature and salinity on the early development of the oyster	PR 16*	1935	42	How relaying and transferring at different seasons affects the fatness of oysters	PR 35*	1944
11	Sex ratios in oysters of known age	PR 17*	1936	43	Further improvement needed in packing and grading oysters (E&F)	OFC 19*	1945
12	Temperature as a factor in starfish distribution	PR 17*	1936	44	The oyster drill in Canada	PR 37	1947
13	Rearing separate oyster spat on trays	B 48*	1935	45	Green-gilled oysters are wholesome	GSC 6	1947
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15	Cheap protection for wood against shipworms	PR 22*	1938	47	Control of eel-grass in oyster culture areas	GSC 23	1954
16	Cheap protection for wood against shipworms (E&F)	OFC 1*	1938	48	Oyster mortalities, old and new, in the Maritimes	PR 65	1956
17	Cheaper floating trays for rearing separate spat (E&F)	OFC 2*	1938		French version of this article	GSC 27	1956
18	Preparation of concrete-coated cardboard spat collectors (E&F)	OFC 3*	1938	49	Recent oyster mortalities and a method for restoring the fishery (E&F)	GSC 28	1957
19	How do oysters land on the bottom under water (E&F)	OFC 4*	1938	50	Rehabilitation of disease-depleted oyster fisheries (E&F)	GSC 29	1957
20	The capacity of an acre (E&F)	OFC 5*	1938	51	The effects of boring sponges on oysters	PR 68	1958
21	Starfish -- the oyster's worst enemy in our waters (E&F)	OFC 6*	1939	52	Control of the boring sponge on oyster beds	PR 69	1958
22	How to avoid damage caused by starfish (E&F)	OFC 7*	1939	53	The epidemic oyster disease and rehabilitation transfers in 1957 (E&F)	GSC 31	1958
23	When to put materials in the water to catch spat (E&F)	OFC 8*	1939	54	Stock-taking of molluscan shellfish resources and prospects for improvement	PR 71	1958
24	Hang collectors at various levels to avoid overcrowding on floats (E&F)	OFC 9*	1939	55	Introducing European oysters to the Maritimes	PR 71	1958
25	Helping oyster growers to collect spat by predicting sets	PR 27*	1940	56	Useful publications for oyster farmers of the Maritimes (E&F)	GSC 32	1958
26	Quicklime for destroying starfish on oyster grounds	PR 27*	1940		Abbreviations:		
27	Starfish growth	PR 28*	1940	*	— not available		
28	Movements of starfish	PR 28*	1940	PR	— Progress Report (Atlantic) of the Fisheries Research Board of Canada		
29	The removal of starfish from oyster beds by mops	PR 28*	1940	B	— Bulletin of the Fisheries Research Board of Canada		
30	The oyster drill -- a serious enemy in some areas (E&F)	OFC 10*	1940	DF	— Bulletin of the Department of Fisheries, Ottawa		
31	Use of quicklime for killing starfish on oyster grounds (E&F)	OFC 11*	1940	OFC	— Oyster Farming Circular, Fisheries Research Board of Canada		
32	A machine for separating spat from cardboard collectors (E&F)	OFC 12*	1940	GSC	— General Series Circular, Fisheries Research Board of Canada, St. Andrews, N. B.		
				E&F	— Available in both English and French versions		

